

# WOUND BOTULISM

Once again, **Wound botulism** has been found in Washington State in people who inject black tar heroin. The State reported 2 cases on 11/14/03: one in Yakima and one in the Tacoma area. Health officials believe the heroin may have been contaminated with *Clostridium botulinum*, the bacteria that causes wound botulism.

Injecting heroin that contains this bacteria can cause very serious infection and possibly death. **Muscling and skin-popping pose greater risk.** Snorting can also be a risk.

There is no way to know which heroin has the bacteria and which does not. **Cooking the dope does not kill it.**

### What do symptoms look & feel like?

- Weakness and drooping eyelids
- Blurred or double vision
- Extreme dry mouth and sore throat
- Trouble swallowing or talking
- Trouble breathing/increased shortness of breath

These symptoms occur within 1-2 days after becoming infected.

You may or may not notice an abscess. If not treated, botulism can paralyze you and shut down your breathing.

If wound botulism is caught early, it can be treated. It is very important to catch it early and begin treatment immediately.

If you have any of the symptoms,  
**Go to the nearest EMERGENCY ROOM...immediately!!!**

Take this flyer with you so you will be seen quickly.